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| APPLICATION NO. | FILING DATE | FIRST NAMED INVENTOR | ATTORNEY DOCKET NO. | CONFIRMATION NO. |
|---|-------------|----------------------|---------------------|------------------|
| 10/799,887 | 03/15/2004 | Mario Ricco | Q79841 | 8343 |
| 23373 | 7590 | 06/17/2004 | EXAMINER | |
| SUGHRUE MION, PLLC 2100 PENNSYLVANIA AVENUE, N.W. SUITE 800 WASHINGTON, DC 20037 | | | HARRIS, ANTON B | |
| | | | ART UNIT | PAPER NUMBER |
| | | | 2831 | |

DATE MAILED: 06/17/2004

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

| | | | |
|------------------------------|------------------------|---------------------|--|
| Office Action Summary | Application No. | Applicant(s) | |
| | 10/799,887 | RICCO ET AL | |
| | Examiner | Art Unit | |
| | Anton B Harris | 2831 | |

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) Responsive to communication(s) filed on 15 March 2004.
- 2a) This action is FINAL. 2b) This action is non-final.
- 3) Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) Claim(s) 1-10 is/are pending in the application.
 - 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) Claim(s) 1-10 is/are rejected.
- 7) Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) accepted or b) objected to by the Examiner.

Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).

Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
 - a) All b) Some * c) None of:
 1. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. 10/799,887.
 3. Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413) |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08) Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____ | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152) |
| | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

DETAILED ACTION***Claim Objections***

1. Claim 10 is objected to because of the following informalities:

Claim 10 recites “A fuel tank for a motor vehicle, in particular an LPG fuel tank, comprising a hollow body containing at least one electrical component and having a mouth closed by a covering plate, said fuel tank being wherein said plate has at least one through hole, within which there is received a connector member according to claim 1.”

The Office interprets “A fuel tank for a motor vehicle, in particular an LPG fuel tank, comprising a hollow body containing at least one electrical component and having a mouth closed by a covering plate, said fuel tank being wherein said plate has at least one through hole, within which there is received a connector member according to claim 1.” to be “A connector member according to claim 1, wherein a fuel tank for a motor vehicle, in particular an LPG fuel tank, comprising a hollow body containing at least one electrical component and having a mouth closed by a covering plate, said fuel tank being wherein said plate has at least one through hole, within which there is received a connector member.”

Any further rejection of, or indications of the allowability of claim 10 is based on claim 10, as it is understood by the Office. Appropriate correction is required.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

2. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

3. Claims 1-10 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Miller et al. (6,452,099 B1).

Regarding claim 1, Miller et al. (col. 2, line 47-col. 3 line 67) discloses a connector member comprising:

a body 14 at least partially made of synthetic material or of elastomer material (col. 3, lines 20-24), designed to be received in a through hole 18 of a wall or plate of the tank 12, in which there are embedded one or more conductor pins 58, 60, 62, 64 projecting from the opposite ends of said body 14.

Regarding claim 2, Miller et al. (col. 2, line 47-col. 3 line 67) discloses a means (col. 3, lines 4-6) for pre-loading axially said body or parts 24, 30 thereof.

Regarding claim 3, Miller et al. (col. 2, line 47-col. 3 line 67) discloses the body of the connector 14 is made of synthetic material (col. 3, lines 20-24) and has a portion 36 designed to be received in the aforesaid through hole 18 of the wall or plate of the tank 12, said portion 36 having a circumferential groove 39, and an end flange 38 provided with holes (figure 2 to the right of reference line 38), said flange 38 having front cavities 27, each traversed by a respective conductor pin 58, 60, 62, 64 with a seal ring 40 mounted within each of said axial cavities between the respective conductor pin 58, 60, 62, 64 and the wall of the cavity 27.

Regarding claim 4, Miller et al. (col. 2, line 47-col. 3 line 67) discloses that the seal rings 40 mounted within said front cavities 27 of the flange 38 are pressed axially by portions projecting from a covering plate 30 juxtaposed with said flange 38.

Regarding claim 5, Miller et al. (col. 2, line 47-col. 3 line 67) discloses that the covering plate 30 has holes 27 corresponding to the holes of the flange 38 so as to enable fixing to the body 24 of the connector 14 by means of the same screws (col. 3, lines 4-6) that fix the connector 14 to the wall or plate of the tank 12.

Regarding claim 6, Miller et al. (col. 2, line 47-col. 3 line 67) discloses that the body of the connector 14 is made of elastomer material (col. 3, lines 20-24) and also performs the function of seal (col. 1, lines 25-30).

Regarding claim 7, Miller et al. (col. 2, line 47-col. 3 line 67) discloses an auxiliary plate (col. 1, lines 20-32), which can be fixed to the wall or plate of the tank 12 so as to compress axially the body 14 made of elastomer material (col. 3, lines 20-24) of the connector 14 against a contrast surface made in its seat (col. 1, line 27).

Regarding claim 8, Miller et al. (col. 2, line 47-col. 3 line 67) discloses that conductor pins 58, 60, 62, 64 have portions of variable cross section.

Regarding claim 9, Miller et al. (col. 2, line 47-col. 3 line 67) discloses that the body 14 made of elastomer material (col. 3, lines 20-24) has, at least at one of its ends, axial protuberances set at a distance apart from one another, which each surround a respective conductor pin 58, 60, 62, 64 and which are each received in a respective seat 54, 56, of said wall or plate or of said covering plate 30.

Regarding claim 10, Miller et al. (col. 2, line 47-col. 3 line 67) discloses a fuel tank 12 comprising a hollow body containing at least one electrical component (col. 2, lines 50-54) and having a mouth 18 closed by a covering plate 30, said fuel tank 12 being wherein said plate 30 has at least one through hole 44, within which there is received a connector member 29.

Conclusion

4. The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure.

Weyl et al. U.S. Patent No. 6,150,607 discloses a fuel tank including conductors, seals, openings, connectors, and elastomer material.

Kashimoto et al. U.S. Patent No. 4,458,108 discloses a tank including conductors, seals, openings, connectors, screws, and elastomer material.

5. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Anton B Harris whose telephone number is (571) 272-1976. The examiner can normally be reached on weekdays from 8:30am to 5:00pm. If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Mr. Dean Reichard, can be reached on (571) 272-2800 ext 31. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is (703) 872-9306.

abh
6/14/04

Dean A. Reichard 6/14/04
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